



TRAVEL MONTANA
FY09 ANNUAL MARKETING PLAN

Table of Contents

Introduction & Mission Statement.....	1
Branding Initiative.....	2
Budget FY09.....	4
Priorities.....	5
Program Marketing Plans	7
Consumer Marketing	8
Public Relations	11
Public Information	14
Electronic Marketing	17
Overseas Marketing	21
Meetings and Conventions / Group Travel.....	24
Publications	28
Visitor Information Systems.....	31
Tourism Development and Education	34
Operations and Industry Services	38
Montana Film Office	43
Priorities for Overall Program.....	48
Priority One.....	49
Priority Two.....	51
Priority Three	53
Priority Four	55

Introduction & Mission Statement

Travel Montana has crafted an FY09 Annual Marketing Plan based in part on the goals and actions identified in the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012*. Travel Montana has identified four main priorities from the Strategic Plan to focus on for the next fiscal year.

The new statewide tourism industry five-year strategic plan, *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012* is available for review at www.travelmontana.org/2008strategicplan. In addition, the Tourism Advisory Council spearheaded the creation of a *Montana Tourism Charter* with numerous members signed in support of this document. Continued efforts to sign additional members will continue throughout the coming years. This document is available for review at www.travelmontana.org/charter/charter.asp.

The priorities in this plan also take into account Travel Montana's mission statement as outlined below.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Travel Montana's mission is to strengthen Montana's economy through the promotion of the state as a vacation destination and film location. By maximizing the combined talents and abilities of its staff, and with guidance from the Governor's Tourism Advisory Council, Travel Montana strives to promote a quality experience to visitors while encouraging preservation of Montana's environment and quality of life.

Branding Initiative

Based on a recommendation from Governor Schweitzer and as part of Montana's statewide Tourism and Recreation 5-Year Strategic Plan, Travel Montana has been undergoing a brand development process. The goal of this process was to produce a brand for Montana which uncovers the essence of Montana and sets our state apart from our competitors as a vacation destination. Ultimately, by uniting behind one brand, we should be able to unify and leverage Montana's collective marketing resources because the more promotional dollars we can get to speak the same message, the more impactful our message will be.

The following is the result of the 11-month development process which included a brand advisory committee, qualitative and quantitative research, out-of-state focus groups, in-state stakeholder workshops, consumer testing and refinement of the statements.

FINAL BRAND PLATFORM:

1. MORE SPECTACULAR UNSPOILED NATURE THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE LOWER 48
2. VIBRANT AND CHARMING SMALL TOWNS THAT SERVE AS GATEWAYS TO THE NATURAL WONDERS
3. BREATHTAKING EXPERIENCES BY DAY, RELAXING HOSPITALITY AT NIGHT

MORE SPECTACULAR UNSPOILED NATURE THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE LOWER 48

- KEY POINT OF DIFFERENTIATION
- BUILDS ON THE CORE STRENGTH OF THE MONTANA TOURISM PRODUCT
- LEVERAGES POSITIVE ASSOCIATIONS WITH ALASKA
- CAPTURES "SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE" "GREAT OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE" AND "UNBEATEN PATH"
- NEED TO "ICONIFY" 8 – 10 PARTICULAR LOCATIONS

VIBRANT AND CHARMING SMALL TOWNS THAT SERVE AS GATEWAYS TO THE NATURAL WONDERS

- MITIGATES "REMOTE" WITH IMAGE OF POCKETS OF VISITOR SERVICES
- CAPTURES "COMFORT" AND "CHARM" NEEDS OF AUDIENCE
- SHIFTS FOCUS FROM COMMUNITIES AS DESTINATIONS TO COMMUNITIES AS GATEWAYS

BREATHTAKING EXPERIENCES BY DAY, RELAXING HOSPITALITY AT NIGHT

- BREATHTAKING EXPERIENCES BY DAY
 - CONVEYS EXHILARATION
 - BOTH PHYSICALLY AND/OR VISUALLY BREATHTAKING, DEPENDING ON THE INTERESTS OF THE AUDIENCE
 - LEVERAGES “SPECTACULAR UNSPOILED NATURE” INTO A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
 - “EXPERIENCES” NOT “ADVENTURES”
 - EXPERIENCES” IS SOFTER, BROADER, MORE ACCESSIBLE THAN “ADVENTURES”
- RELAXING HOSPITALITY AT NIGHT
 - LOW KEY
 - CONVEYS COMFORT, SENSE OF WARMTH, WELCOME
 - NOT LAVISH OR LUSH
 - THAT’S NOT CREDIBLE WITH THE AUDIENCE
- DAY/NIGHT
 - SUGGESTIVE OF A BALANCE BETWEEN EXHILARATION AND COMFORT
 - NOT MEANT TO BE RESTRICTIVE

HOW THE BRAND PLATFORM APPLIES TO THE MARKETING PLAN:

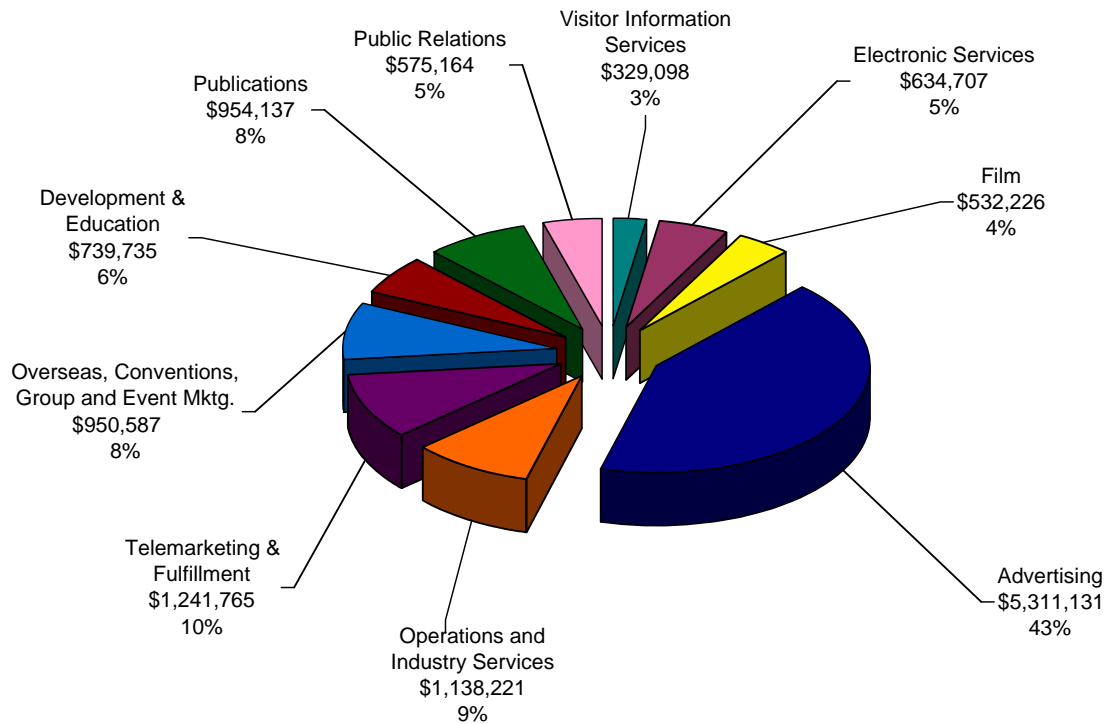
The brand statements act as an internal road map for how Travel Montana markets Montana from here on out. This is the internal language Travel Montana will use when evaluating marketing messages; this is *not* consumer focused language.

The focus of Travel Montana’s marketing will be on *first-time visitors*. This brand has the strongest appeal to convert non-visitors to visitors. Montana’s repeat visitors will explore the depth and breadth of Montana’s offerings.

In addition, Goal 1 of the Montana Strategic Plan specifies focusing on *high-value, low impact visitors*. Travel Montana defines this market as the geo-tourist. Geotourism, as defined by National Geographic, is tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place – its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and well being of its residents. Geo-travelers are looking for visitor experiences that maintain a destination’s sense of place and complement rather than compete with the needs of local residents. Fifty-five to sixty-five million Americans fall under this definition. Travel Montana plans to target their consumer marketing to the geo-traveler.

Budget FY09

Travel Montana's FY09 Working Budget after disbursements to various entities is \$12,406,771. The dollar amount and percentage of overall budget for each Travel Montana program is listed below.



Priorities

Travel Montana has outlined four priorities to focus on over the next fiscal year. These priorities align with the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012* and will be referenced as such throughout this section. These priorities were selected with the intent to involve the widest range of Travel Montana programs. The following two pages list these four priorities.

Each program at Travel Montana has created an FY09 Marketing Plan with goals, actions and measurable objectives that highlight these priorities. The individual program plans are listed in the Table of Contents.

In addition, the goals for each program have also been cross-referenced with the priorities to show synergies between all programs at Travel Montana. Beginning on page forty-eight, each priority will be reviewed in relation to the individual goals for each Travel Montana program. This section will define which program(s) serve as the lead (primary) for that priority and which program(s) serve as support (secondary).

PRIORITY 1: INCREASE FOUR-SEASON TOURISM REVENUE STATEWIDE THROUGH EFFECTIVE MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS, FOCUSING ON HIGH-VALUE, LOW-IMPACT VISITORS.

High-value, low-impact visitors (as defined by the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012*) are "...visitors who contribute to Montana's economic and social prosperity while respecting and appreciating Montana's authentic natural and cultural assets."

Priority 1 aligns with Goal 1 in the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012*.

PRIORITY 2: CREATE AND LEVERAGE PUBLIC/PRIVATE MARKETING PARTNERSHIPS TO EXPAND MONTANA'S REACH TO ITS AUDIENCE.

Priority 2 aligns with Action 1.1.a in the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012*.

**PRIORITY 3: ENHANCE TRACKING AND REPORTING OF RESULTS FROM
ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION EFFORTS.**

- + TRACKING CONSUMER LEADS
- + RETURN ON INVESTMENT ANALYSIS

Priority 3 aligns with Action 1.1.e in the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012*.

**PRIORITY 4: INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF MONTANA COMMUNITIES TO BE MORE
COMPETITIVE IN TOURISM THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS, OUTREACH
AND EDUCATION.**

Priority 4 aligns with Action 8.1 in the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012*.

Program Marketing Plans

The following section provides a complete marketing plan for each of Travel Montana programs plus the Montana Film Office. Each of the plans follow this format:

- + **Overview**
Provides an overview of the current program.
- + **Budget**
Defines the dollar amount of the budget for each individual program as well as the percentage as it relates to the total Travel Montana budget.
- + **Goals**
Outline what the program would like to accomplish in the next fiscal year. These are usually written as a broad overview of the future aim of the organization. The goals are cross-referenced with the priorities.
- + **Actions**
Are the individual actions/projects that will be undertaken in the next fiscal year in order to achieve the goals of the programs. Actions include a timeline, the goal it is aligned with and (if needed) what other programs support the action.
- + **Objectives**
Are measurable with a definite purpose in mind.
- + **Partnership Opportunities**
Outlines the public-public and/or public-private partnership opportunities that each program is providing in the next fiscal year.
- + **Calendar of Events**
Highlights the major events that are relevant to the program throughout the next fiscal year.

Consumer Marketing

OVERVIEW:

The Consumer Marketing program is responsible for promoting the state as a vacation destination to domestic travelers, ensuring that the significant economic benefit from out-of-state visitors continues to grow. The program develops marketing campaigns and promotions that define the state's unique attributes and set it apart from competing destinations. Campaigns are designed to create awareness for Montana, generate an interest in visiting and influence travel intention.

BUDGET:

The FY09 budget for the Consumer Marketing Program is \$5,311,131 (43% of the total Travel Montana budget).

GOALS:

- a. Use paid advertising and strategic promotional partnerships to increase consumer awareness of Montana as a travel destination. **Priorities:** 1 & 2.
- b. Implement a Montana branding initiative to ensure and encourage marketing consistency across numerous public and private platforms. **Priorities:** 2 & 4.
- c. Increase the number of qualified consumer inquiries about travel to Montana. **Priority:** 3.
- d. Increase the number of inquiries that are converting to actual visitors. **Priority:** 3.
- e. Increase shoulder season (spring, fall, and winter) visitation across the state. **Priority:** 1.

ACTIONS:

- + Develop a "Montana Brand Guidebook" – a toolkit, complete with online resources and content, to help educate internal staff & industry on Montana's target audience, the brand platform, and how to consistently apply the brand in various industry settings & promotional efforts. **Goals:** b. **Timeline:** November 2008. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Develop a co-operative incentive/matching fund program to accompany the new brand guidebook to encourage implementation of the brand and to facilitate public-private tourism & recreation partnership development. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** July 2009.
- + Organize and host workshops across the state to introduce the brand guidebook and related tools, demonstrate application of the brand, and facilitate further use. **Goals:** b. **Timeline:** December 2008/January 2009.
- + Diversify shoulder season marketing efforts by promoting experiences (wildlife, scenery) in addition to activities (skiing, fishing, bicycling, etc.). **Goals:** e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR, PUB, INTL, GRP/M&C & VIS.
- + Continue to develop mutually beneficial partnerships that allow Travel Montana and public, private, and non-profit partners to leverage each other's resources, align missions, and trade brand equity to connect with new, receptive audiences. **Goals:** a, c, d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR & PUB.

- + Using visitation data from visitmt.com and ITRR, identify and target niche markets/interests with customized campaigns and content. **Goals:** a, c, d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR & PUB.
- + Work with E-Marketing to develop, launch, and track an E-Marketing/CRM program that will improve dialogue with existing leads and generate new interest. **Goals:** c, d & e. **Timeline:** Launch October 2008; Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB & OP.
- + Work to incorporate methods that measure the quality of the lead (not just the quantity):
 - Web analytics reports measuring website visitation & engagement (campaign-specific landing pages, special content accessed, downloads, time on site, etc.)
 - Performance of email blasts beyond "open rate" (read rate, click-through rate/take action, forward-to-friend, etc.) **Goals:** c & d. **Timeline:** Launch November 2008; Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB.
- + Continue marketing presence in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Seattle, Chicago and/or Atlanta (depending on results from FY08 campaign). **Goals:** a, c, d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB & PR.
- + Conduct awareness and/or advertising effectiveness/conversion studies in Seattle, Chicago, and Atlanta to help measure impact of key market campaigns. **Goals:** c, d & e. **Timeline:** July 2009.
- + Work with ITRR, tourism regions, and CVBs to develop a plan to address affordability of and access to advertising awareness & effectiveness studies for tourism entities. **Goals:** c, d & e. **Timeline:** July 2009. **Support Programs:** ADMIN & IS.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Fulfill 225,000 trip planning kits to potential travelers. (This represents an increase of 10% over FY07 levels.)
- + Generate 300,000 clicks to the website as a result of online advertising. (This represents a 100% increase over FY07 levels.)
- + Leverage approximately \$4 million in Travel Montana advertising placement funds into at least \$10 million in media value (generating \$2.50 in media value for every \$1 spent).
- + Maintain summer season visitation (4,993,000 visitors in the 3rd quarter of 2007), while increasing shoulder season visitation by 5% by 2010.
- + Increase vacation travelers 7% by 2010 by developing more meaningful Montana connections with consumers.
- + Increase opportunities for collaboration with in-state tourism regions, CVBs and private businesses to leverage funds for higher impact promotions based on media opportunity.
 - Increase dollars generated by print co-ops by 10% (for a total of \$41,700).
 - Increase dollars generated by internet co-ops (banner ads, pre-roll video, e-blasts, etc) by 25% (for a total of \$55,900).

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- + **Print**
 - Newspaper insert with Madden Preprint Media
 - Magazine sections

- Direct mail
- + **Web**
 - Geo-targeted web banners and video pre-roll placement
 - HTML email blasts to targeted purchased lists
 - E-newsletter sponsorships with proven partners/websites
- + **Events**
 - Ski Montana Roadshow – Seattle & Minneapolis
 - Other events – TBD

CALENDAR:

- + **July 2008**
 - July 15: Winter print and internet co-op details released
- + **August 2008**
 - August 1: Winter event co-op details released
 - August 23-26: ESTO, Bonita Springs, FL
- + **October 2008**
 - October 6-8: TAC Meeting, Billings, MT
 - October 27-30: TIA Marketing Outlook, Portland, OR
 - TBD: Winter promotional event
- + **November 2008**
 - November 1: Warm season print and internet co-op details released
- + **January 2009**
 - TBD: Annual Partners Marketing Plan Meeting (date to be set at October TAC Meeting)
- + **February 2009**
 - February 2-4: TAC Meeting, Helena, MT
- + **March 2009**
 - March 1: Warm season event co-op details released (tentative)
- + **June 2009**
 - June 1-3: TAC Meeting, Polson, MT
 - TBD: Warm season promotional event

Public Relations

OVERVIEW:

Publicity is one of the most believable and effective types of exposure a travel destination can get. Coverage in key travel and news media markets can result in stories and programs that generate interest in Montana. The publicity/photography program works with various media outlets to facilitate this coverage and help spread the word about the latest and greatest reasons for visiting.

BUDGET:

The budget in FY09 for the Public Relations Program includes both Publicity and Public Information. This figure is \$575,164 (5% of the total Travel Montana budget).

GOALS:

- a. Generate continuous positive editorial placement within all travel media outlets (domestic and international), including newspapers, consumer publications, travel trade media, broadcast outlets and the Web. **Priority:** 1.
- b. Strengthen and utilize the relationships with the state's six tourism regions, CVBs and tourism industry suppliers/partners to support and maintain fresh, cost-effective public relations strategies. **Priorities:** 2 & 4.
- c. Continue to build a digital image library that supports the needs of the media and is accessible by means of a searchable database. **Priority:** 2.
- d. Through the new software program, PR Trak, improve Montana's ability to track media coverage that results in a timelier, complete, accurate assessment of the dollar value of Montana's travel and tourism editorial exposure. **Priority:** 3.

ACTIONS:

- + Through PR Trak, monitor and report publicity values twice annually; distribute the PR exposure highlights at each of the TAC meetings. **Goal:** d. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Develop and present outreach programs for the regions/CVBs and their members to educate the audience on the value and importance of editorial placement and solicit their support for media efforts. **Goal:** b. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** PIO.
- + Continue to build the image library, utilizing the support of the regions/CVBs, as well as businesses involved in providing tourism-related services. **Goals:** a, b & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing.

- + Grow the content of the newly established pressroom, to provide creative, current subject matter to the media, as well as providing an outlet for those involved in state tourism to get the word out on new offerings (events, activities, lodging, etc.) for the visitor. **Goals:** a, b, & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Continue to develop creative and enticing direct email campaigns to appropriate markets. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Work with the regions/CVBs to develop and implement group (minimum of one trip per region per year) and individual media tours, with the goal being to generate positive editorial placement. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + With the support of the contracted PR agency – Mercury Advertising, conduct media missions or themed media events in key national markets (New York, Los Angeles, Denver/Boulder) to increase awareness of Montana’s diverse travel product and to pitch targeted story placement. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Participate in trade / travel shows with a record of strong media attendance to develop new media connections, such as SATW and POWWOW. **Goal:** a. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Support photo workshops (through logistical support and itinerary development) as a means of reaching the visitor interested in this niche market. Currently supporting the Mentor Series Montana Photo Trek. **Goals:** b & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Develop public relation strategies that integrate into consumer marketing campaigns, to help support and generate greater results from Montana’s advertising efforts. **Goal:** a. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** CM & WEB.
- + Work in tandem with the Montana Dinosaur Trail, Hands of Harvest and Crown of the Continent, all Travel Montana supported programs, to facilitate positive coverage for these newsworthy entities. **Goals:** a, b & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** TD&E & PIO.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Generate at least \$14 million in ad equivalency as measured by PR Trak.
- + Grow our media database, currently at 1,400, by 4%, approximately 50 new entries, using both proactive (researching and developing relationships with appropriate media) and reactive (responding to media requests, thereby establishing relationships).

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

Partner not only with regions/CVBs on hosted media visits, but also with individual businesses providing Montana products and guest services. Collaborate on itineraries and securing reduced or comped lodging, meals, and guided activities for media visits. Further educate these businesses on the value positive press coverage adds to their business, as a result of partnering with state efforts.

CALENDAR:

- + **July 2008**
 - July 10-12: Governor’s Cup Walleye Tourney press trip with Missouri River Country
 - July 10-14: Folk and Funk press trip with Gold West Country
 - July 10-15: Mentor Series Photo Trek, Glacier National Park
 - July 11-13: National Folk Festival, Butte
 - July 30-Aug 5: Tributaries of the Yellowstone press trip with Yellowstone Country

- + **August 2008**
 - August 8-11: Outdoor Retailer Summer Market in Salt Lake City
 - August 13-18: Crow Country press trip with Custer and Yellowstone Countries
- + **September 2008**
 - September 30-October 5: Birding/Hiking Extravaganza
- + **October 2008**
 - October 7-12: Yellowstone Country Birding/Hiking Extravaganza
 - October 13-26: SATW annual meeting, Houston, Texas
 - TBD: Potential media event in Boulder in conjunction with MSAA
- + **January 2009**
 - TBD: Outdoor Retailer Winter Market in Salt Lake City
- + **FY09**
 - TBD: One to three media blitzes in key editorial markets – not yet scheduled

Public Information

OVERVIEW:

This program develops outreach and public information programs to publicize Travel Montana's and the Montana tourism industry's initiatives and activities in order to educate and encourage community cooperation, support and understanding of the industry.

GOALS:

- a. Expand tourism education and outreach into Montana's communities. **Priority:** 4.
- b. Expand Travel Montana staff outreach regarding the assistance available through the division's marketing and technical resources. **Priorities:** 2 & 4.
- c. Develop resources to educate the public about Montana's tourism industry. (i.e. Intranet site, e-newsletters, fact sheets, etc.) **Priority:** 4

ACTIONS:

- + Coordinate the attendance of a Travel Montana representative at one board and/or committee meeting of each of the six regions and eleven CVBs in order to foster better communication between the state and our tourism partners and build awareness of Travel Montana programs. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Update and revise as needed the Tourism Speaks and Travel Montana 101 presentations so that they can be used by Travel Montana as well as other partners in Montana's tourism industry to increase support, understanding and local cooperation for Montana's tourism industry and build public awareness of Travel Montana programs. **Goals:** a & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** WEB.
- + Work with representatives from the regions and CVBs to identify committees, councils and interested organizations within their communities who would benefit from the Tourism Speaks presentation. Give a Tourism Speaks presentation to at least one civic organization per region per year. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Work with the Travel Montana staff to maintain and update Travel Montana's Intranet website content. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Oversee the development, editing, and publication of the monthly Travel Montana e-newsletters, speaking points, Tourism Fast Fact Sheets and other related outreach materials. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** ALL.

- + Establish and maintain effective working relationships with media contacts to promote and cultivate media coverage of Montana and its tourism opportunities through press releases, interviews, etc. **Goals:** a & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** ADMIN & PR.
- + Oversee crisis communication activities on behalf of Travel Montana and when applicable, assist partners with crisis communication. **Goals:** a & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** WEB.
- + Assist in the coordination of the TRAVEL MONTANA Marketing Plan in partnership with our advertising agency. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** January – March 2009. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Attend industry conferences to keep abreast of tourism trends, initiatives and research. **Goals:** c. **Timeline:** August & October 2008; June 2009.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Measure the percentage of attendance of Travel Montana staff at region/CVB board and/or committee meetings. Total number of meetings to be scheduled is 17.
- + Measure whether the Tourism Speaks presentation was presented to at least one civic group in each region in the next fiscal year.
- + Increase the number of press releases published per year by 20%.
- + Schedule face-to-face meeting with one news editor/reporter each quarter in a relevant market and medium to educate this individual on the benefit of tourism through key selling points.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- + Work with regions, CVBs and other industry partners to identify organizations that would benefit from public outreach sessions regarding tourism's impacts, benefits and opportunities.
- + Provide outreach materials to industry partners such as tourism statistics, fact sheets, presentations, etc.

CALENDAR:

- + **August 2008**
 - August 24-26: ESTO, Bonita Springs, FL
- + **October 2008**
 - October 28-30: TIA Marketing Outlook, Portland, OR

- + **May 2009**
 - May 6-8: Public Relations Society Association Travel and Tourism Conference, Kansas City, MO
 - May 9-17: 26th Annual National Tourism Week
- + **June 2009**
 - June 21-23: Travel and Tourism Research Association Conference, Honolulu, HI
- + **On-Going**
 - Produce monthly the Travel Montana Update e-newsletter

Electronic Marketing

OVERVIEW:

The foundation of Travel Montana's electronic marketing program is our "Tourism" database. This is an extensive database of tourism related information from resorts to rodeos. This information is made available through a number of print and electronic services, such as the Internet. This cost-effective method of disseminating travel information gives consumers the ability to obtain comprehensive Montana travel information "instantly" from anywhere in the world.

BUDGET:

The FY09 budget for the Electronic Marketing Program is \$634,707 (5% of the total Travel Montana budget).

GOALS:

- a. Increase shoulder season traffic on visitmt.com by providing new and enhanced content. Traffic will be driven to spring and fall sections. **Priority: 1.**
- b. Add features to visitmt.com that will allow for partnership opportunities with regions, cities and private businesses. These features will combine entities in a unique way to enhance their overall marketability and enhance their presence on visitmt.com. **Priority: 2.**
- c. Develop specific implementation plans for recommendations made from Key Performance Indicator Analysis and 2007s Web conversion study. Web sites will be optimized based on diagnosed factors affecting KPIs. **Priority: 3.**
- d. Increase traffic to kids site by developing partnerships with communities and existing organizations and drive children to visit our site for information and giveaways that ultimately encourage them to participate in "outdoor" activities. **Priority: 4.**

ACTIONS:

- + Add niche sections to visitmt.com to increase four-season tourism. **Timeline:** September 2008. **Support Program:** CM.
 - Spring
 - Fall
- + Develop at least four new features to visitmt.com that will partner with the regions, cities and private businesses. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** CM.
- + Develop at least one application for release on mobile devices using visitmt.mobi (phones, PDA, Blackberry). The application will promote spring activities in Montana. **Goal:** a. **Timeline:** April 2009. **Support Program:** CM.
- + Implement blog functionality on the consumer sites. **Goal:** a. **Timeline:** October 2008.
- + Post printable sheets on each region page that makes recommendations for business, attractions and events to expose visitors to other opportunities in the area. **Goal:** b. **Timeline:** March 2009.

- + Implement an enhanced mapping component on Travel Montana's primary sites. Use Yahoo, Google or other dynamic mapping component to provide service layers, pinpoint locations and driving directions. **Goal:** b. **Timeline:** January 2009.
- + Develop packages based on the information garnered from image studies, Web Trends and Web conversion studies. **Goal:** a & b. **Timeline:** September 2008. **Support Program:** CM.
- + Streamline all forms on Travel Montana sites so that the minimum information is gathered to complete a request and maintain a contact. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** August 2008.
- + Develop monthly implementation plans based on Key Performance Indicator Reports that will allow Travel Montana to optimize all its sites. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** October 2008. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Develop an implementation plan based on the 07-08 Web site conversion studies to increase the usability of visitmt.com and wintermt.com. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** August 2008. **Support Program:** CM.
- + Add database field to allow searching by geographical areas and features regarding lodging, attractions, etc. This will include a mapping feature to bring up the same information within a 20-mile radius. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** February 2009.
- + Provide a rotating current event display on the homepage of visitmt.com. Events will be in random order and feature large and small events. **Goal:** a & c. **Timeline:** March 2009.
- + Develop a contest for kids on montanakids.com that encourages them to get outside. **Goal:** d. **Timeline:** March 2009. **Support Programs:** CM & PIO.
- + Post "Featured Communities" on montanakids.com that identify and emphasize unique outdoor activities in those areas. **Goal:** d. **Timeline:** June 2009.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Increase time spent on visitmt.com by 5%, page views by 5% and registration conversions by 10%.
- + Increase traffic on visitmt.com for fall and spring (page views) by 15%.
- + Increase traffic to montanakids.com by 10%.
- + Gather baseline data on traffic and usability within the niche sections including, but not limited to:
 - Microbreweries
 - Rodeos
 - Farmers' markets and agriculture tours
 - Dining
 - Biking

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- + **Visitmt.com**
 - Four sections (content TBD) that will partner with regions, cities and private businesses.
 - Printable region area sheets partnering with the regions, public and private attractions.
 - Create package functionality for tourism partners.

- + **Montanakids.com**
 - Create package functionality for tourism partners.
 - Create “featured communities” sections the regions, public and private attractions.
- + **Outreach**
 - Throughout the year the Electronic Marketing staff would like to visit a board meeting in each region to discuss partnership opportunities on Travel Montana's primary consumer sites and discuss how the program can serve the partners better.

CALENDAR:

- + **July-September 2008**
 - Season niche sections
 - Focused packages
 - Streamline forms
 - Conversion study implementation plan
- + **October-December 2008**
 - Extend blog functionality
 - Montana Members Club
 - Monthly implementation plans

- + **January-March 2009**
 - Region printable sheets
 - Mapping component
 - Area database field
 - Random rotating events
 - "Outdoor" kids contest

- + **April-June 2009**
 - Featured "Outdoor" communities on montanakids.com

Overseas Marketing

OVERVIEW:

Travel Montana aggressively promotes Montana as a vacation destination to the international travel trade – including tour operators, tour wholesalers (receptive tour operators), travel agents and media, with a particular focus on Germany, the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Japan, Taiwan, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. The goal of this program is to increase the number of overseas visitors and overnights, as well as to increase the inclusion of the Montana tourism product in tour operator's brochures.

BUDGET:

In the overall FY09 budget Overseas is combined with Conventions and Group Travel and Events Marketing comprising \$950,587 (8% of the total Travel Montana budget). As a standalone, Overseas has a budget of \$645,295.

GOALS:

- a. Further develop and foster positive relationships with overseas tour operators and USA based receptive tour operators. **Priority:** 1.
- b. Increase the number of international visitors to Montana from current and new markets. **Priority:** 1.
- c. Research methods of tracking actual overnight of international visitors per year. **Priority:** 3.
- d. Provide technical assistance to Montana partners on international marketing. **Priority:** 4.
- e. Enhance and maintain product knowledge of Montana facilities, attractions and events. **Priorities:** 1 & 4.

ACTIONS:

- + Attend trade shows to meet with tour operators and media to promote Montana as a vacation destination and encourage the inclusion of more tourism product in tour company brochures; follow up with the latest information on Montana such as Vacation Planners, etc. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** November 2008; January – May 2009.
- + Distribute the trade show leads to Montana suppliers for follow-up, and have all leads available on the intranet site. **Goals:** b & c. **Timeline:** November 2008; January – May 2009. **Support Programs:** WEB & PUB.
- + Include an international marketing session at annual Governor's Conference. **Goal:** d. **Timeline:** March 2009. **Support Program:** TD&E.
- + Conduct a direct mail campaign for tour operators by sending an in-house quarterly newsletter that highlights new Montana product as well as offering suggested itineraries or new/unique attractions and destinations. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** July 2009. **Support Programs:** GRP/M&C, PUB, PR & PIO.
- + Organize and conduct the RMI Mega-FAM in partnership with South Dakota to educate tour operators from Montana's target market on Montana tourism product. Conduct other

familiarization tours as needed or on an as-requested basis. **Goal:** a, b, d & e. **Timeline:** September 2008 / Ongoing.

- + Investigate cooperative opportunities with partners such as CVBs, regions or Montana tourism suppliers to supplement the costs. **Goals:** b & d. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Present information and updates on international market at TAC meetings and to regions/CVBs as needed. **Goal:** d. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + In April 2009 prepare list of lodging facilities, attractions, etc. for site visits by fall of 2009; report findings back to tour operators, etc. for their consideration for inclusion in their Montana tour products. Also report to TM staff, regions and CVBs as appropriate. **Goals:** d & e. **Timeline:** October 2008.
- + Track results via RMI Annual Marketing and TRIP report and via information/ samplings through ITRR if funding is available. **Goals:** c & d. **Timeline:** November 2009.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Increase overseas visitation to Montana from the reported 3% to 4% (ITRR sampling) to 5%.
- + Increase the number of Montana overnights offered ("product on the shelf") in the RMI TRIP report from 6% to 8%.
- + Develop a measurement tool to calculate the actual number of overnights booked in Montana per overseas market.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- + Work with the CVBs, regions and private sector to conduct international marketing training sessions (goal is three sessions for FY09) throughout the year.
- + Partner with Montana tourism suppliers on the promotion of their product through attendance at trade shows.
- + Partner with Montana tourism suppliers on the promotion of their product through participation in FAM tours.

CALENDAR

- + **August 2008**
 - August 30 – September 5: Scandinavian Mission, Sweden and Denmark
- + **September 2008**
 - September 13-19: Western & Oriental FAM tour (UK)
 - September 26 – October 6: RMI Mega-FAM in cooperation with SD, MT suppliers, CVBs and regions
- + **October 2008**
 - October 1-6: Continuation of RMI Mega-FAM
- + **November 2008**
 - November 3-6: Benelux sales mission
 - November 7-13: World Travel Market trade show in London, UK in cooperation with RMI
 - November 14-18: Visit USA Italy Showcase, Verona, Italy in cooperation with RMI
- + **January 2009**
 - January 7-13: Scandinavian Mission including Sweden and Norway, in cooperation with RMI
 - January 25-29: Go West Summit in Albuquerque, NM
- + **February 2009**
 - February 11-14: North American Journeys Tour Operator Summit in Los Angeles, CA
 - February 15-26: Australian Mission in cooperation with RM
- + **March 2009**
 - March 9-16: ITB trade show in Berlin, Germany in cooperation with RMI
 - March 16-20: Sales calls and trainings in Paris, France in cooperation with RMI
 - March 30-31: Governor's Conference on Tourism, Helena, MT
- + **April 2009**
 - TBD: RMI Summit Meeting followed by the RMI RoundUp in ID
 - TBD: RoundUp post FAM to Montana
- + **May 2009**
 - May 16-20: Attend TIA's International Pow Wow in Miami, FL
 - TBD: Active America Travel Summit in MN (Kumamoto office attends for TM)
- + **June – September 2009**
 - TBD: Site visits to Montana tourism product

Meetings and Conventions / Group Travel

OVERVIEW:

The Meeting/Conventions and US/Canadian Group Travel programs are responsible for promoting Montana as a vacation and convention/meeting destination to tour operators, travel agents, travel journalists and meeting planners in the USA and Canada.

BUDGET:

In the overall FY09 budget Meetings and Conventions/Group Travel is combined with Overseas and Events Marketing comprising \$950,587 (8% of the total Travel Montana budget). As a standalone, Meetings and Conventions/Group Travel has a budget of \$225,292.

Meetings and Conventions:

GOALS:

- a. Build and maintain a positive image with prospective meeting and convention planners.
Priority: 1.
- b. Generate and distribute leads to the CVBs for convention facilities in their areas. **Priorities: 1 & 4.**
- c. Establish some research and baseline information for the number of meeting and convention bookings and the economic impact. **Priority: 3.**
- d. Establish measurement to increase convention attendee's stay in Montana by one night.
Priority: 3.

ACTIONS:

- + Advertise on key Internet meeting and convention sites, use value-added email blasts and banner advertising. **Goals: a & b. Timeline: Ongoing.**
- + Continue the promotion and updates of www.montanameetings.com. **Goal: a & b. Timeline: Ongoing. Support Program: WEB.**
- + Continue the Invite-A-Convention Packets to promote to attendees to increase their stay in Montana while attending a convention. **Goals: a & d. Timeline: Ongoing.**
- + Provide joint ventures advertising placement opportunities in key trade publications. **Goals: a & b. Timeline: Ongoing.**
- + Assist media in writing about the convention and meeting opportunities in Montana. **Goal: a. Timeline: Ongoing. Support Program: PR.**
- + Identify opportunities to establish and nurture new relationships with planners and media to enhance Montana's image. **Goal: a. Timeline: Ongoing. Support Program: PR.**
- + Partner with consumer marketing and publicity on appropriate projects. **Goal: a. Timeline: Ongoing. Support Programs: PR & CM.**

- + Attending industry events such as Destination Marketing Association International. **Goals:** c & d. **Timeline:** July 2008.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Increase inquiries to www.montanameetings.com by 5% over FY07.
- + Increase number of partners to five for the Trade Show Assistance Program.
- + Gather baseline data by establishing a measurement for Joint Ventures advertising by number of leads generated and submitted Request For Proposals (RFPs) from meeting planners to Travel Montana via the www.montanameetings.com.
- + Gather baseline data by establishing a tracking and reporting of results of advertising/promotion efforts.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- + **Trade Show Assistance Program**
This program assists regions and CVBs in exploring new domestic markets by encouraging first-time exhibition at business-to-business meeting and convention trade shows outside of the state. It is not only for regions/CVBs new to trade show exhibition, but can also be useful for established regions/CVBs that are looking to exhibit at a show that they have never been to before. It is not intended for a region/CVB to use for a trade show at which it currently exhibits. The assistance comes in the form of a fifty (50%) percent reimbursement of qualified and approved expenses for trade show exhibition. The application can be found at: www.travelmontana.state.mt.us/OURPROGRAMS/MeetingsConventions.asp.
- + **Advertising Joint Venture**
This program allows several cooperative placement opportunities with Travel Montana for potential partnerships with various tourism regions, CVBs and private sector in trade publications. Travel Montana reserves a full page ad then resells three 1/6th page ads to potential partners. Possible trade publications include *Association News*, *Meetings West*, *Smart Meetings* and *Small Market Meetings*.

CALENDAR:

- + **July 2008**
 - July 28-30: DMAI, Las Vegas, NV
- + **On-Going**
 - TBD: Media buy for trade publications such as *Small Market Meetings*, *Smart Meetings*, *Association News* and *Meetings West*.

Domestic Group Travel:

GOALS:

- a. Build and maintain a positive image with prospective group tour planners. **Priority: 1.**
- b. Create top of the mind awareness of Montana as a group tour destination. **Priority: 1.**
- c. Convert inquiries into group tour bookings. **Priority: 1.**
- d. Provide tour operators with the tools to build a successful Montana tour itinerary.
- e. Generate more awareness of statewide group tour product including Lewis and Clark Trail attractions, Glacier National Park and events of interest to the group tour market. **Priority: 1.**
- f. Establish research to track group visitation and their economic impact to Montana. **Priority: 3.**

ACTIONS:

- + Advertising placement in key trade publications. **Goals:** a, b & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Attending industry events, National Tour Association Convention (NTA), American Bus Association Convention (ABA) and Tour Associated Partners (TAP) annual meeting. **Goals:** a, b, c, d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Sponsor refreshment booth at the NTA convention to gain Montana exposure and enhance awareness. **Goals:** a, b, c, d & e. **Timeline:** November 2009.
- + Provide Group Tour Planning manual and continually update www.montanagroups.com. **Goals:** a, d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Conduct Familiarization tour opportunities to Montana to increase awareness of tour itinerary opportunities. **Goals:** a, b, d, & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Distribute quarterly electronic newsletters, which highlight new Montana product as well as offering suggested itineraries or new/unique attractions and destinations. **Goals:** a, b, d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB & INTL.
- + Provide yearly the Montana Calendar to key Tour Operators. **Goal:** a, c & e. **Timeline:** December 2008.
- + Assist media in writing about the group travel opportunities in Montana. **Goal:** a, b, d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** PR.
- + Explore additional opportunities for joint venture advertising and co-op projects with regions, CVBs and Montana tourism suppliers. **Goals:** d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Increase visits and inquiries to www.montanagroups.com by 5% over 2007.
- + Gather baseline data by establishing an evaluation method for advertising/ promotion efforts.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- + Familiarization tour opportunities with regions/CVBs and Montana's industry partners.
- + The opportunity to sponsor and participate in the refreshment booth during NTA.
- + Co-op advertising in Trade Publications such as *Courier*, *Destination*, *Group Tour*, and *Leisure Group Travel*.

CALENDAR:

- + **Summer 2008**
 - August: Tour Operator winner of the NTA Trip Giveaway
- + **November 2008**
 - November 15-19: NTA, Pittsburgh, PA
- + **January 2009**
 - January 8-12: ABA, Charlotte, NC
- + **February 2009**
 - February 19-21: BankTravel, Little Rock, AR
- + **June 2009**
 - TBD: Travel Tourism Alliance Partners, Rapid City, SD
- + **On-Going**
 - TBD: Media Buy for Trade Publications such as *Courier*, *Destination*, *Group Tour*, and *Leisure Group Travel*.

Publications

OVERVIEW:

Publications play an important role in the planning process of potential visitors. The guides provide accurate, colorful, and easy to read information about Montana's year-round recreational opportunities and attractions to visitors of all ages. They are often a potential visitor's first glimpse at what Montana has to offer and play an important part in the vacation planning process of travelers. This program develops advertising programs for the promotion of Montana businesses and works closely with tourism partners to coordinate marketing efforts. Publication distribution is through chambers, visitor centers, consumer shows, conventions, local businesses and direct mail from inquiries driven by the advertising.

BUDGET:

The FY09 budget for the Publications Program is \$954,137 (8% of the total Travel Montana budget).

GOALS:

- a. Provide high quality fulfillment pieces to consumer inquiries to convert interest into sale. **Priority: 1.**
- b. Provide information in an easy to use format to encourage travel into all areas of the state and throughout all seasons. **Priority: 1.**
- c. Work closely with other TM marketing campaigns to coordinate branding efforts. **Priority: 2.**
- d. Continue to offer Montana businesses no- or low-cost advertising opportunities to promote their tourism product and services. **Priority: 2.**
- e. Continue communication with all State and Federal agencies, publishing consistent messages on public lands, regulations and permits. **Priority: 2.**

ACTIONS:

- + Continue to work closely with contracted ad agency, print vendors and freelance photographers to maintain high quality printed materials. **Goals:** a, b, c, d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** CM, WEB & PR.
- + Coordinate printed materials with current marketing campaigns. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** CM & WEB.
- + Coordinate redesign of Kid's Brochure with finalized redesign of kid's website. **Goal:** a, b, c & e. **Timeline:** December 2008. **Support Programs:** WEB.
- + Coordinate redesign of state Highway Map with branding efforts and MDT. **Goals:** a, b, c & e. **Timeline:** December 2008. **Support Programs:** CM & PR.
- + Incorporate Usability Study results into new creative (layout, design and content) for the 2009-2010 Vacation Planner that will include information all seasons. Consider the inclusion of a CD with featured audio podcasts for listening/learning while driving. **Goals:** a, b, c & d. **Timeline:** Late Summer 2008. **Support Programs:** CM & WEB.

- + Incorporate Usability Study results into new creative (layout, design and content) for the 2009-2010 Winter Guide. **Goals:** a, b, & c. **Timeline:** Early Spring 2009. **Support Programs:** CM & WEB.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Gather baseline data through study conducted in FY08. Use this study to set measurable objectives for FY10.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

Opportunities for affordable advertising to Montana businesses within some of the 1.6 million pieces of literature distributed each year, is an excellent way for businesses to reach the travel market.

- + **Montana Vacation Planner**
Travel Montana's main response piece, this statewide travel services data book offers free listings and space available for advertising at reasonable fees. Space reservation deadline is generally August 1. Updated yearly. Distributed through direct mail, consumer shows, chamber offices, visitor information centers and local businesses. About 475,000 printed each year.
- + **Montana Winter Guide**
Travel Montana's winter response piece provides comprehensive information on Montana's downhill ski areas, cross-country resorts and trail systems, snowmobile reference charts, snowcoach tours and winter accommodations. Advertorial placements require the purchase of the space. Space reservation deadline is generally the end of April. Updated yearly. Distributed through direct mail, consumer shows, chamber offices, visitor information centers and local businesses. About 85,000 printed each year.

CALENDAR:

- + **Early August 2008**
 - Winter Guide ready for distribution
 - Deadline for Vacation Planner ad space and surveys
- + **Early September 2008**
 - Deadline for Vacation Planner advertising materials

- + **Early January 2009**
 - Vacation Planner and ready for distribution
- + **Late April 2009**
 - Deadline for Winter Guide ad space and materials

Visitor Information Systems

OVERVIEW:

The Visitor Information System (VIS) Program is a component of an integrated and comprehensive tourism marketing strategy. Upon arriving in and traveling through Montana via highway, air, or rail, travelers need an integrated, strategic system of information from a variety of sources for a successful vacation experience. The VIS Program's goal is to work with Montana's state, federal, local and tribal partners to create a system of visitor information dissemination and promote the system through travel web sites, visitor guides and partners.

BUDGET:

The FY09 budget for the Visitor Information Systems Program is \$329,098 (3% of the total Travel Montana budget).

GOALS:

- a. Use technology to enhance Montana visitor information dissemination and marketing efforts. Ensure that components of the system are promoted on web sites and in visitor guides. **Priority: 1.**
- b. Create cooperative marketing campaigns between agriculture and tourism. **Priority: 2.**
- c. Work with MDT to incorporate "Attractions" category of signage in the LOGO signs program. **Priority: 2.**
- d. Create an inventory of visitor information system (VIS) components available statewide. Determine linkages (or lack of) between components and gaps in the system, and develop strategies and partnerships to enhance the system and fill the gaps. **Priority: 2.**
- e. Enhance tracking of international marketing efforts. **Priority: 3.**
- f. Provide training for Travel Montana's nine visitor information centers (VICs). **Priority: 4.**
- g. Identify actions and initiatives to reconnect families and youth with the outdoors. **Priority: 4.**

ACTIONS:

- + Expand traveler information options on 511 system during 2008 by partnering with MDT to record weekly "things to do and see" in Montana. **Goal: a. Timeline: Summer 2008. Support Programs: WEB, PUB & IS.**
- + Work with Travel Montana's Electronic Marketing staff to update visitmt.com site with webpage promoting the state's system of visitor information services. **Goal: a. Timeline: July 2008. Support Programs: WEB, PUB & IS.**
- + Integrate VIC Display Case Program with the Made-in-Montana and Grown-in-Montana programs to create a cooperative marketing campaign to reach nonresident visitors. **Goal: b. Timeline: Ongoing. Support Programs: CM, WEB & PUB.**
- + Work with Made in Montana and Grown in Montana to develop program guidelines. **Goal: b. Timeline: September 2008. Support Programs: CM, WEB & PUB.**

- + Work with MDT staff on legislation to allow expansion of the LOGO program. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** Spring 2009. **Support Programs:** ADMIN.
- + Develop strategies to improve the Visitor Information system and fill gaps. **Goal:** d. **Timeline:** December 2010. **Support Programs:** WEB & PUB.
- + Track international visitation by supplying VIC staff with questionnaires during the summer 2008 season that will track country of origin, number of people in party, length of stay and airplane deboardings. **Goal:** e. **Timeline:** Summer 2008. **Support Programs:** INTL.
- + Compile 2008 international visitation report for International Marketing Program by December 2008. **Goal:** e. **Timeline:** December 2008. **Support Program:** INTL.
- + Organize VIC staff training at 2009 Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation. **Goal:** f. **Timeline:** March 2009. **Support Program:** WEB.
- + Work with FWP and its partners to organize and conduct a summit on reconnecting kids with the outdoors. **Goal:** g. **Timeline:** September 2008. **Support Programs:** CM & WEB.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Gather baseline data to evaluate 511 tourism-option volume of usage in fall 2008 and propose future program expansion.
- + Begin creation of statewide VIS inventory in 2008.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- + Collaborate with MTRI, Tourism regions and CVBs to develop a comprehensive system of visitor information dissemination.
- + Partner with MDT to identify, develop and erect approved specific information and tourist-orientated directional signs.

CALENDAR:

- + **October 2008**
 - October TAC: Review SEGP guidelines and application and release to the public
- + **November 2008**
 - November 30: VICs close for the season
- + **December 2008**
 - Mid-December: SEGP grant deadline
- + **April 2009**
 - April 1: Begin statewide distribution of Travel Planner through Certified Folder Displays
 - April 1: Begin distribution of Travel Planner at select MDT Rest Areas.
- + **May 2009**
 - May 1: VICs open for the season
 - May 1: Begin Made-in-Montana / Grown-in-Montana partnership at VICs
 - May 1: Begin surveying international visitors at VICs
- + **June 2009**
 - June 1: Begin 511 visitor information services option

Tourism Development and Education

OVERVIEW:

The Tourism Development and Education Program provides financial, technical and marketing assistance for Montana tourism and recreation projects, programs, initiatives, products and services. The program's activities include financial grants for non-profit sponsors involved in developing or enhancing tourism-related facilities and Montana's cultural, heritage and nature tourism products. Technical assistance is provided to both public and private sector entities through education services including community, regional and statewide workshops, an annual Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation, a recurring statewide strategic planning process, and the Montana Superhost customer service training program.

BUDGET:

The FY09 budget for the Tourism Development and Education Program is \$739,735 (6% of the total Travel Montana budget).

GOALS:

- a. Use Montana's tourism "bed tax" to leverage public and private sector investments into the creation, enhancement and protection of tourism-related facilities that demonstrate the ability to increase Montana's attraction as a visitor destination and/or keep current visitors in Montana longer and encourage them to spend more money. Place special focus on preserving, enhancing and protecting Montana's cultural and heritage resources for the use and enjoyment of Montanans and our visitors. **Priority: 4.**
- b. Assist communities, regions, non-profit organizations and other public entities in the development of Montana's cultural, heritage and nature tourism products, services and networks by providing technical and financial support as well as facilitation and education services. **Priorities: 2 & 4.**
- c. Provide Montanans information and training opportunities regarding tourism as an economic and community development tool through workshops, seminars, assessments, strategic planning and networking. **Priority: 4.**

ACTIONS:

- + Award Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) Grants to projects that create, enhance or protect tourism-related facilities that increase Montana's attraction as a visitor destination, keep visitors here longer and help them to spend more money. **Goals: a & b. Timeline: October 2008. Support Programs: WEB & PIO.**
- + Survey TIIP Grant Recipients 1995-2008 regarding visitation, visitor spending, benefits from TIIP grant project. **Goal: a, c. Timeline: Sept-Nov 2008. Support Program: OP.**
- + Help finance the production of at least 100,000 copies of the Montana Cultural Treasures booklet and pay for its statewide distribution. **Goal: b. Timeline: March 2009. Support Program: IS.**
- + Help create, produce and distribute the Greater Yellowstone Geotourism MapGuide with project partners including National Geographic's Center for Sustainable Destinations. **Goal: b. Timeline: April 2008-June 2009. Support Programs: ALL.**

- + Help promote, distribute and further develop the Crown of the Continent Geotourism MapGuide and related website with project partners that include National Geographic's Center for Sustainable Destinations. **Goal:** b. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Provide technical and financial assistance for 2-3 ongoing cultural and heritage tourism projects including:
 - Update, reprint and distribute the Montana Dinosaur Trail brochure and website, and assist with trail promotion and development. **Goals:** b & c. **Timeline:** Summer 2008. **Support Programs:** ALL.
 - Help create and print the *Of Sage & Stone Heritage Trails of Southwest Montana* guidebook. **Goals:** b & c. **Timeline:** Summer 2008. **Support Programs:** ALL.
 - Assist with promotion and development of the Hands of Harvest: The Craft-Heritage Trails of North Central Montana member network. **Goals:** b & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Provide financial and technical support for the Friends of the Beartooth All American Road organization. **Goals:** b & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Provide financial and technical support for the multi-state/province Top Ten Scenic Drives in the Northern Rockies marketing program. **Goal:** b. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** CM, WEB, INTL, PR & PUB.
- + Provide technical, financial, and development assistance to the priority projects of the Montana Tribal Tourism Alliance. **Goals:** b & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Work with other Travel Montana Program Managers to plan, organize and implement 1-2 statewide and/or regional workshops on tourism-related topics. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** CM & PIO.
- + Plan, organize and implement the 2009 Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism & Recreation. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** March 30-31, 2009. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Provide statewide customer service training opportunities through the Montana Superhost Program contract with Flathead Valley Community College. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** June 2009. **Support Programs:** PIO, WEB & IS.
- + Coordinate with other Travel Montana programs on Strategic Plan Education and Outreach workshops and presentations. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** PIO & IS.
- + Develop an electronic Strategic Plan reporting mechanism for plan stakeholders. **Goal:** c. **Timeline:** July 2008. **Support Programs:** WEB & PIO.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Leverage more than \$1.5 million in public and/or private sector funds in the projects awarded 2008 TIIP Grants.
- + Develop a data collection survey method to gather resident and non-resident visitation and other visitor use information from TIIP Grant recipients.

- + Implement the TIIP Grant recipient data collection survey instrument to develop baseline data in 2008 and establish a schedule for continuing this survey as a method for evaluating the TIIP Grant program's return on investment.
- + Schedule 100 Superhost seminars statewide with 2,400 participants.
- + Provide technical and financial assistance for two to three cultural and heritage tourism projects.
- + Implement one to two statewide and/or regional workshops on tourism-related topics.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- + **TIIP Grant Program**
 - Public and private sector funding partners to assist in financing TIIP grant projects.
 - Promotion and publicity efforts to highlight TIIP funded facilities, their improvements, products and services.
- + **Culture/Heritage Program Assistance**
 - Public and private sector partners to provide financial and technical assistance for the development, promotion and distribution of Montana's cultural and heritage tourism products and services.
 - Promotion of the existing cultural and heritage tourism products in the state through the media – Montana, regional, national and international – as well as Travel Montana's publications, consumer marketing and electronic marketing services.

- + **Educational Assistance**
 - Participation in and promotion of Travel Montana's education workshops, conferences, Montana Superhost Sessions and Strategic Plan implementation efforts.
 - Assistance in developing and putting into action a strategic plan implementation and monitoring process.
 - Identify topics for regional and statewide workshops and Governor's Conference presentations.

CALENDAR:

- + **August 1, 2008**
 - TIIP Grant Application Deadline
- + **October 7-8, 2008**
 - Tourism Advisory Council Sends TIIP Grant
 - Award Recommendations to MT Commerce
 - Director for final approval
- + **March 30-31, 2009**
 - Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism & Recreation, Helena,
<http://travelmontana.mt.gov/conference/>

Operations and Industry Services

BUDGET:

The FY09 budget for the Operations and Industry Services Program is divided into two budget categories. Fulfillment and the Contact Center (Telemarketing) is \$1,241,765 (10% of the total Travel Montana budget). Operations (includes Administrative Support) and Industry Services is \$1,145,853 (9% of the total Travel Montana budget).

Operations: Fulfillment and Administrative Support

OVERVIEW:

This program serves as the administrative and fulfillment center for Travel Montana and the Montana Film Office. Operations works closely with Travel Montana staff to provide vital information and administrative support to enhance the overall mission of tourism development and multi-dimensional marketing of the state as a year-round travel destination. The Fulfillment Program utilizes the Contact Center and Travel Montana's front desk as key points of customer contact, by providing potential tourism customers with prompt, accurate and current information.

GOALS:

- a. The program will continue to promote increased visitation by providing outstanding customer service and interactive relationships with the inquiring public by promptly answering all requests for information by phone and mail. **Priority: 1.**
- b. Increase availability of Travel Montana's Publications to Visitor Information Centers, Convention and Visitor Bureaus and Area Chambers of Commerce. **Priority: 2.**
- c. Improve fulfillment timeline.
- d. The Operations Department strives to provide professional administrative support to Travel Montana/Montana Film Office with the following services:
 - Provide excellent customer service and front desk coverage 8:00-5:00 M-F
 - Provide professional administrative services to staff
 - Provide accounting services for division programs and managers
 - Coordinate purchasing activities
 - Monitor and track contracts and proposals

ACTIONS:

- + Continue to fulfill the "Invite a Friend" request so that consumers receive information within 14 days of Travel Montana receiving the request. **Goals: a & d. Timeline: Ongoing.**
- + Answer all inquiries promptly and enter customer information into VISITS software system. **Goal: a & c. Timeline: Ongoing.**
- + Keep current with the ever-changing USPS mail rates and specifications. **Goal: c. Timeline: Ongoing.**

- + Continually seek the best rates for shipping large shipments (pallets) of information. **Goals:** a. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Work with Visitor Information System program to continue expanding and enhancing the distribution of Travel Planners through a private contractor by ensuring that product is delivered to the private contractor and the needed contracts are in place. Focus to be placed on high traffic corridors of Montana. **Goals:** b & d. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** VIS.
- + Continue sending out Bulk information promotional materials in a timely manner to stakeholders. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Streamline the VISITS (Siebel) computer program by requesting changes that would save Operations not only time in processing requests, but money in postage costs. **Goals:** a & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Create a key performance indicator by designing a user-friendly survey. The survey will be included with random customer requested Travel Montana publications. Develop the information that will be asked.

Operations: Contact Center

GOALS:

- a. Provide professional travel counseling and customer service with coverage 7:00 am-6:00 pm M-F.
- b. Respond to consumer inquiries with Montana information and maintain a database of inquiries by date, source code and interests.

ACTIONS:

- + Begin to upgrade the VISITS computer program to Siebel 8.0. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** January 2009. **Support Programs:** WEB & CM.
- + Streamline the VISITS computer program by requesting changes that would save time in processing requests and provide better service for the visitors. **Goals:** a & b **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB & CM.
- + Provide feedback from potential visitors about difficulties in finding information in Travel Montana publications or websites. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB & PUB.
- + Explore options of integrating a tourism component of the 511 system into the contact center. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** November 2008. **Support Programs:** WEB & VIS.
- + Provide a FAM trip for the contact center agents to a tourism region. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** October 2008.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + For every phone call document the date, ask the inquirers where they found the phone number and track their interests.

- + Respond to all requests for information within 72 hours.

Industry Services

OVERVIEW:

Industry Services provides a staff liaison to the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC), regions/Convention and Visitor Bureaus (CVBs) and other state agencies to assist with oversight and to assure compliance. By providing the staff liaison, this program provides essential support to Montana's non-profit tourism organizations and oversees the distribution of the Lodging Facility Use Tax to the six Tourism Regions and eleven CVBs. In addition, the program monitors the regions and CVBs for compliance and adherence to the current Regulations. It also works with the Department of Revenue to provide Lodging Facility Use Tax collection amounts to public and private sectors.

GOALS:

- Serve as principal liaison between TAC, statewide tourism organizations, Travel Montana, and private sector representatives to coordinate projects; apprise cooperators of program changes, initiatives, and requirements; and facilitate exchange of ideas and information. **Priority: 4.**
- Provide information on program operations, activities, and changes; interpret and explain State regulations; and answer questions from region/CVB representatives. **Priority: 4.**
- Conduct annual financial and program audits of region/CVB tourism organizations receiving tax revenue. **Priority: 4.**
- Distribute quarterly payments to tourism organizations according to approved project plans and ensure that necessary funding is available for timely disbursement. **Priority: 4.**
- Enhance and foster relationship with Department of Revenue to assure continued open lines of communication and sharing of information between Revenue, Travel Montana, TAC and regions/CVBs.

ACTIONS:

- + Work with the TAC Chair & Vice-Chair to develop and establish agendas, select and compile informational materials, and coordinate other details required for successful TAC meetings. **Goal: a. Timeline:** September 2008, January 2009, May 2009. **Support Programs:** ALL.
- + Verify accuracy and compliance of annual marketing plans and project applications before submitting to the TAC for final approval. **Goals: a & b. Timeline:** May 2009.
- + Distribute project applications submitted after June TAC meeting to the Audits/Applications Committee for final approval. **Goals: a & b. Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Administer fiscal contracts for tourism organizations to ensure the effective distribution of funds according to decisions and guidelines of TAC. **Goal: b. Timeline:** June 2009.
- + Work with Region/CVB co-chairs to plan, and coordinate biannual Region/CVB meetings. **Goal: b. Timeline:** November 2008, March 2009.

- + Provide training and assistance for region/CVB directors and their staff as needed. **Goal:** b. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Continue to work toward sharing region & CVB information via the intranet. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** September 2008; Ongoing. **Support Program:** WEB.
- + Review quarterly financial and program compliance reports returned by the 17 certified tourism organizations. **Goals:** b, c & d. **Timeline:** July 2008, October 2008, January 2009, April 2009.
- + Present audit results to TAC with recommendations for follow-up or appropriate disciplinary actions. Ensure effective implementation of all post audit actions required by TAC. **Goals:** a, c & d. **Timeline:** October 2008, February 2009.
- + Track tax receipts throughout the year to ensure availability of revenue for approved programs, and apprise TAC of revenue status. **Goals:** a, d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Review revenue reports, calculate and verify adjustments, identify and resolve errors and discrepancies, and present findings to the Travel Montana Administrator and TAC. **Goals:** a, d & e. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Provide Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to public and private sector via the Travel Montana Intranet website. To be updated on a quarterly basis. **Goals:** a, d & e. **Timeline:** September 2008, December 2008, March 2009, June 2009.
- + Work with Department of Revenue to develop a query that shows monthly revenue collection trends. **Goal:** e. **Timeline:** November 2008.
- + Work with the Regulations Committee & TAC to streamline the current Rules & Regulations. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** June 2009.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Have all fiscal audits completed prior to the end of the calendar year.
- + Post revenue reports within 90 days of the end of each quarter to the Intranet site.
- + Post region/CVBs marketing plans by September of each fiscal year to the Intranet site.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

N/A

CALENDAR:

- + **July 2008**
 - 4th Quarter Compliance Reports due from regions/CVBs
 - Regulations Committee meeting
- + **August 2008**
 - 1st Quarter payment to regions/CVBs
 - Schedule and perform audits for regions/CVBs
- + **September 2008**
 - Schedule and perform audits for regions/CVBs
 - Regulations Committee meeting (if needed)

- TAC Meeting Preparation
- Post FY09 region/CVB Marketing Plans to Intranet
- + **October 2008**
 - October 6 – 8: TAC Meeting – Review audits and Regulations changes
 - Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to Intranet
 - 1st Quarter Compliance Reports due from regions/CVBs
 - Updated FY09 Revenue Projections to regions/CVBs
 - Schedule and perform audits for regions/CVBs
- + **November 2008**
 - Region/CVB meeting (two ½ days)
 - 2nd Quarter payment to regions/CVBs
 - Schedule and perform audits for regions/CVBs
- + **December 2008**
 - Schedule and perform audits for regions/CVBs
 - Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to Intranet
- + **January 2009**
 - January 1: FY08 Completion Reports due from regions/CVBs
 - 2nd Quarter Compliance Reports due from regions/CVBs
 - TAC Meeting preparation
- + **February 2009**
 - February 2 – 4: TAC Meeting, Helena – review audits, approve suggested Regulations changes
 - 3rd Quarter payment to regions/CVBs
- + **March 2009**
 - Region/CVB meeting (one full day)
 - FY10 Projected revenue figures to regions/CVBs
 - Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to Intranet
- + **April 2009**
 - 3rd Quarter Compliance Reports due from regions/CVBs
- + **May 2009**
 - 1: region/CVB Annual Marketing Plans due
 - Review 17 region/CVB Marketing Plans for accuracy and compliance
 - TAC Meeting Preparation
- + **June 2009**
 - June 1 – 3: TAC Meeting – review and approve marketing plans
 - 4th Quarter payment to regions/CVBs
 - FY10 Annual Contracts to regions/CVBs
 - FY10 Marketing Plan approval letters to regions/CVBs
 - Prepare FY10 region/CVB Budget/Compliance Worksheets
 - Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to Intranet

Montana Film Office

OVERVIEW:

The primary role of the Montana Film Office is to bring productions (feature films, commercials, documentaries, television programs, and still shoots) into Montana for the overall economic benefit of the state. As the number of productions filmed in Montana continues to grow, so do the job opportunities for Montanans and the amount of direct expenditure to Montana businesses generated by out of state production companies.

It is the responsibility of the Montana Film Office to ensure that the state is “film friendly.” We not only work with producers to find locations that fit their script, we also act as their liaison with private and public entities through every phase of production. The Montana Film Office also administers and markets the Big Sky on the Big Screen Act, Montana’s film production incentive program.

BUDGET:

The FY09 budget for the Montana Film Office Program is \$532,226 (5% of the total Travel Montana budget).

GOALS:

- a. Market Montana as a competitive, creative, and viable filming location for feature films, TV commercials, documentaries, still shoots, short films, and music videos as well as television shows, miniseries, and movies of the week. **Priority: 1.**
- b. Increase the direct and indirect economic impact of the film industry by encouraging more film production to film in the state of Montana. **Priority: 1.**
- c. Continue to generate press releases that result in positive articles on Montana’s film industry in the film industry trade press as well as the local Montana press. **Priorities: 1 & 2.**
- d. Improve the Montana Film Office website’s usefulness and effectiveness. **Priority: 1.**
- e. Improve the quantity and quality of the data in the film office Reel-Scout database by continuing to enhance the project, location, and contact sections of the database. **Priorities: 1 & 3.**
- f. Encourage the growth of the indigenous film industry in Montana, by offering Montana filmmakers and film festivals resources and technical support, thereby creating a sustainable industry in state, which in-turn increases competitiveness for out of state projects. **Priorities: 2 & 4.**
- g. Enhance Montana’s competitiveness with improvements to the Big Sky on the Big Screen Act through legislative means. **Priority: 1.**

ACTIONS:

- + Create a new print advertising campaign for FY09 and increase placement of this campaign in trade publications, directories, online, and in festival catalogs. Publications include *Daily Variety*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Production Update*, *Shoot*, *Produced By*, *Screen*

International, Moviemaker, Filmmaker, and Below the Line magazines. Directories include *Creative Industry Handbook, HCD, Production Point, EP Paymaster, Showbiz Labor Guide,* and *Shoot Directory*. Festival Catalogs include Sundance, SXSW, Rural Route, and all Montana Festival catalogs. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** Ongoing.

- + Have a strong Montana presence at important film industry trade shows. This includes a branding effort to keep Montana in top of mind awareness of producers. See list of shows under Calendar section. **Goals:** a. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Sponsor and have a strong presence at important film industry film festivals. See list of festivals under Calendar. **Goals:** a & f. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Continue strategic marketing partnership with Film the West, the regional partnership of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and South Dakota. This partnership allows participation in expensive events such as the Sundance Film Festival, and allows us to market regionally. **Goals:** a. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Expand the strategic partnership developed in FY 08 with the state of Mississippi. We will continue expand our presence at the IFP Market, which was a NYC test market last year. We will also co-host an LA based event during the week of the American Film Market and the AFI fest, which run concurrently. Mississippi and Montana form a strong strategic partnership, as they do not compete for the same type of films allowing equal exposure for half the price. **Goals:** a. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Serve out first term on the Board of Directors of the Association of Film Commissioners International, which is useful in establishing industry contacts, and increasing trade press coverage of Montana. **Goals:** a & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Continue annual mailing of Montana Film Office branded calendars to select producers, directors and industry personnel. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** December 2008. **Support Programs:** OPS.
- + Host invitation-only events and dinners for producers of appropriate projects and VIPs to develop new relationships with filmmakers and executives. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** April 2009.
- + Utilize eROI to send out timely updates as needed to Montana Crew Members. **Goals:** f. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** WEB.
- + Utilize eROI to send out direct e-marketing messages to select film industry contacts at least quarterly. **Goals:** a, b & c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** WEB.
- + Run professional scouting trips for all feature productions interested in filming in Montana. **Goals:** a & b. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- + Work with advertising agency, Travel Montana and Commerce PIOs to develop and send out at least five press releases on Montana's film industry. **Goals:** c & f. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** PIO.
- + Develop new and maintain existing good relations with top trade publication writers and editors by actively seeking and taking meetings with them at industry events. **Goals:** c. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** PIO.
- + Continue to attend and sponsor Montana-based film festivals and foster relationships with festival personnel and Montana Filmmakers. See "festivals" in Calendar section. **Goals:** a & f. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** PIO.

- + Continue to publish in print and on the web, a comprehensive guide to filming in Montana, including listings of all qualified Montana businesses and individuals who provide service to the film industry. **Goals:** a, b & f. **Timeline:** February 2009. **Support Program:** PUB.
- + Actively promote the availability of free crew member listings in the Montana Production Guide and on montanafilm.com. **Goal:** f. **Timeline:** February 2009. **Support Program:** PIO.
- + Track competition from surrounding states and provinces as well as worldwide competition, and suggest legislative solutions to keep Montana competitive for the production industry. **Goal:** g. **Timeline:** May 2009. **Support Program:** ADMIN.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

- + Increase advertising buy by 10%.
- + Increase frequency of updates to the site with a minimum of weekly updates to keep site fresh and relevant.
- + Develop a set of KPIs for the film office website and put them into practice to improve functionality of site.
- + Determine the top key search terms that the MFO wants to see improvement in the rankings (these will be determined with the KPIs) and improve organic search engine rankings for montanafilm.com on any search engines for these terms so that the MFO is listed in the top five (above the fold).
- + Undertake at least monthly location photo scouting trips in order to start the process of digitally re-shooting all major Montana towns and various other key locations. Bring in at least 50 new or updated Montana locations.
- + Upload at least 5,000 new images and 500 new locations to the Reel-Scout location database.
- + Increase the number of qualified Montana crew listed by at least 10 crew members.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

These partnership opportunities will be open to the participants listed. In most cases these projects will only be able to move forward with committed partners on board due to budget reasons.

- + **Film Location Brochure**

The film office has begun the process of creating a new publication, which will be open to participation by all regions and CVBs. The publication will be a location brochure; showcasing the entire state, but with specific areas highlighted by those regions and CVBs who wish to enter into a co-op partnership to participate.

- + **Public-Private Marketing Partnerships**

The Montana Film Office is interested in exploring public-private marketing partnerships with entities that have an interest in seeing the film industry grow in Montana. Examples of these types of partnerships would include:

- Co-hosting a filmmaker's reception at a film festival, or co-hosting a "green room" at a festival.
- Partnering with Montana-based film festivals such as HATCHfest to market Montana locations and the festival at festivals and trade shows.
- Partnerships with Montana-based film related businesses.

- + **Public Co-op Marketing Opportunities**

The Montana Film Office is currently involved in a multi-state marketing co-op known as Film the West. This group takes a regional approach to marketing the western region to Los Angeles-based filmmakers. This approach allows the film office to capitalize on shared costs of marketing events, which allows a bigger presence and access to expensive venues such as film festivals. The film office would be open to this type of relationship with interested regions and CVBs.

- + **Montana-based Film Festivals**

The film office will partner with Montana-based film festivals to serve a two-fold purpose. Montana-based film festivals help to foster the local indigenous film industry and offer a venue for local filmmakers to learn and to share their work. The Montana Film Office supports these efforts. The festivals also offer the film office a marketing and networking opportunity to meet with the out-of-state filmmakers and sponsors who are players in the industry. This is a great opportunity to expose these potential clients to the state, as well as to meet with them and discuss what Montana has to offer.

CALENDAR:

- + **September 2008**

- September 14-19: IFP Market - NYC

- + **October 2008**

- October 1-4: Hatch Fest, Bozeman, MT

- + **November 2008**
 - November 5-9: Invitation-only event during AFM and AFI Fest, Los Angeles, CA
- + **January 2009**
 - January 15-25: Sundance Film Festival, Park City, UT
- + **February 2009**
 - February 11-16: Big Sky Documentary Film Festival, Missoula, MT
- + **March 2009**
 - March 14-16: South by Southwest Trade Show, Austin, TX
 - March 13-17: South by Southwest Film Festival, Austin, TX
- + **April 2009**
 - April 9-11: Locations Trade Show and LA Event, Los Angeles, CA
- + **May 2009**
 - May 16-21: International Wildlife Film Festival, Missoula, MT

Priorities for Overall Program

The following section outlines how each programs' individual goals will work together to achieve the four priorities for Travel Montana as an organization. This information provides the reader with a clear idea of where the organization is headed in regard to sustaining and growing the tourism product.

Priority One

INCREASE FOUR-SEASON TOURISM REVENUE STATEWIDE THROUGH EFFECTIVE MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS, FOCUSING ON HIGH-VALUE, LOW-IMPACT VISITORS.

PRIMARY PROGRAMS AND GOALS:

- + **Consumer Marketing**
 - Use paid advertising and strategic promotional partnerships to increase consumer awareness of Montana as a travel destination.
 - Increase shoulder season (spring, fall, and winter) visitation across the state.
- + **Public Relations**
 - Generate continuous positive editorial placement within all travel media outlets (domestic and international), including newspapers, consumer publications, travel trade media, broadcast outlets and the Web.
- + **Electronic Marketing**
 - Increase shoulder season traffic on visitmt.com by providing new and enhanced content. Traffic will be driven to spring and fall sections.
- + **Overseas Marketing**
 - Further develop and foster positive relationships with overseas tour operators and USA based receptive tour operators.
 - Increase the number of international visitors to Montana from current and new markets.
 - Enhance and maintain product knowledge of Montana facilities, attractions and events.
- + **Meetings & Conventions**
 - Build and maintain a positive image with prospective meeting and convention planners.
 - Generate and distribute leads to the CVBs for convention facilities in their areas.

- + **Domestic Group Travel**
 - Build and maintain a positive image with prospective group tour planners.
 - Create top of the mind awareness of Montana as a group tour destination.
 - Convert inquiries into group tour bookings.
 - Generate more awareness of statewide group tour product including Lewis and Clark Trail attractions, Glacier National Park and events of interest to the group tour market.

SECONDARY PROGRAMS AND GOALS:

- + **Publications**
 - Provide high quality fulfillment pieces to consumer inquiries to convert interest into sale.
 - Provide information in an easy to use format to encourage travel into all areas of the state and throughout all seasons.
- + **Visitor Information Systems**
 - Use technology to enhance Montana visitor information dissemination and marketing efforts. Ensure that components of the system are promoted on web sites and in visitor guides.
- + **Fulfillment / Administrative Support**
 - The program will continue to promote increased visitation by providing outstanding customer service and interactive relationships with the inquiring public by promptly answering all requests for information by phone and mail.

Priority Two

CREATE AND LEVERAGE PUBLIC/PRIVATE MARKETING PARTNERSHIPS TO EXPAND MONTANA'S REACH TO ITS AUDIENCE.

PRIMARY PROGRAMS AND GOALS:

- + **Consumer Marketing**
 - Use paid advertising and strategic promotional partnerships to increase consumer awareness of Montana as a travel destination.
 - Implement a Montana branding initiative to ensure and encourage marketing consistency across numerous public and private platforms.
- + **Public Relations**
 - Strengthen and utilize the relationships with the state's six tourism regions, CVBs and tourism industry suppliers/partners to support and maintain fresh, cost-effective public relations strategies.
 - Continue to build a digital image library that supports the needs of the media and is accessible by means of a searchable database.
- + **Electronic Marketing**
 - Add features to visitmt.com that will allow for partnership opportunities with regions, cities and individuals. These features will combine entities in a unique way to enhance their overall marketability and enhance their presence on visitmt.com. At least four new features will be added.
- + **Visitor Information Systems**
 - Create cooperative marketing campaigns between agriculture and tourism.

SECONDARY PROGRAMS AND GOALS:

- + **Public Information**
 - Expand Travel Montana staff outreach regarding the assistance available through the division's marketing and technical resources.
- + **Publications**
 - Work closely with other TM marketing campaigns to coordinate branding efforts.
 - Continue communication with all State and Federal agencies, publishing consistent messages on public lands, regulations and permits.
 - Continue to offer Montana businesses no- or low-cost advertising opportunities to promote their tourism product and services.

- + **Visitor Information Systems**
 - Work with MDT to incorporate “Attractions” category of signage in the LOGO signs program.
 - Create an inventory of visitor information system (VIS) components available statewide. Determine linkages (or lack of) between components and gaps in the system, and develop strategies and partnerships to enhance the system and fill the gaps.
- + **Tourism Development and Education**
 - Assist communities, regions, non-profit organizations and other public entities in the development of Montana’s cultural, heritage and nature tourism products, services and networks by providing technical and financial support as well as facilitation and education services.
- + **Fulfillment / Administrative Support**
 - Increase availability of Montana Promotion’s Publications to Visitor Information Centers and Convention and Visitor Bureaus and Area Chambers of Commerce.

Priority Three

ENHANCE TRACKING AND REPORTING OF RESULTS FROM ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION EFFORTS.

- + TRACKING CONSUMER LEADS
- + RETURN ON INVESTMENT ANALYSIS

PRIMARY PROGRAMS AND GOALS:

- + **Consumer Marketing**
 - Distinguish qualified consumer leads from the overall number of consumer inquiries through the implementation of an E-marketing/CRM program.
 - Use the E-marketing/CRM program, Web Analytics and additional research (conversion and brand awareness studies) to determine the number of qualified leads that convert to actual visitors.
 - Gather baseline data in key markets to garner information on brand awareness.
- + **Public Relations**
 - Through the new software program, PR Trak, improve Montana's ability to track media coverage that results in a timelier, complete, accurate assessment of the dollar value of Montana's travel and tourism editorial exposure.
- + **Electronic Marketing**
 - Develop specific implementation plans for recommendations made from Key Performance Indicator Analysis and 2007's Web conversion study. Web sites will be optimized based on diagnosed factors affecting KPIs.

SECONDARY PROGRAMS AND GOALS:

- + **Overseas Marketing**
 - Determine criteria and method of data collection regarding tracking the number of international visitors. Establish baseline data that measures the economic impact to Montana.

- + **Meetings & Conventions**
 - Determine criteria and method of data collection regarding tracking the number of meetings and convention bookings. Establish baseline data that measures the economic impact to Montana.

- + **Domestic Group Travel**
 - Determine criteria and method of data collection regarding tracking the number of group travel bookings. Establish baseline data that measures the economic impact to Montana.

- + **Visitor Information Systems**
 - Enhance tracking of international marketing efforts.

Priority Four

INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF MONTANA COMMUNITIES TO BE MORE COMPETITIVE IN TOURISM THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS, OUTREACH AND EDUCATION.

PRIMARY PROGRAMS AND GOALS:

- + **Consumer Marketing**
 - Implement a Montana branding initiative to ensure and encourage marketing consistency across numerous public and private platforms.

- + **Public Information**
 - Expand tourism education and outreach into Montana's communities.
 - Expand Travel Montana staff outreach regarding the assistance available through the division's marketing and technical resources.
 - Develop resources to educate the public about Montana's tourism industry. (i.e. Intranet site, e-newsletters, fact sheets, etc.)

- + **Electronic Marketing**
 - Increase traffic to kids site by developing partnerships with communities and existing organizations and drive children to visit our site for information and giveaways that ultimately encourage them to participate in "outdoor" activities.

- + **Visitor Information Systems**
 - Provide training for Travel Montana's nine visitor information centers (VICs).

- + **Tourism Development and Education**
 - Use Montana's tourism "bed tax" to leverage public and private sector investments into the creation, enhancement and protection of tourism-related facilities that demonstrate the ability to increase Montana's attraction as a visitor destination and/or keep current visitors in Montana longer and encourage them to spend more money.
 - Assist communities, regions, non-profit organizations and other public entities in the development of Montana's cultural, heritage and nature tourism products, services and networks by providing technical and financial support as well as facilitation and education services.
 - Provide Montanans information and training opportunities regarding tourism as an economic and community development tool through workshops, seminars, assessments, strategic planning and networking.

- + **Industry Services**
 - Serve as principal liaison between TAC, statewide tourism organizations, Travel Montana, and private sector representatives to coordinate projects; apprise cooperators

of program changes, initiatives, and requirements; and facilitate exchange of ideas and information.

- Provide information on program operations, activities, and changes; interpret and explain State regulations; and answer questions from region/CVB representatives.
- Conduct annual financial and program audits of region/CVB tourism organizations receiving tax revenue.
- Distribute quarterly payments to tourism organizations according to approved project plans and ensure that necessary funding is available for timely disbursement.

SECONDARY PROGRAMS AND GOALS:

+ **Public Relations**

- Strengthen and utilize the relationships with the state's six tourism regions, CVBs and tourism industry suppliers/partners to support and maintain fresh, cost-effective public relations strategies.

+ **Overseas Marketing**

- Provide technical assistance to Montana partners on international marketing.
- Enhance and maintain product knowledge of Montana facilities, attractions and events.

+ **Meetings & Conventions**

- Generate and distribute leads to the CVBs for convention facilities in their areas.

+ **Visitor Information Systems**

- Identify actions and initiatives to reconnect families and youth with the outdoors.